Modernisation of FPIs in Assam

*75. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the MINISTER OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have allotted any funds to Assam Government for expansion, modernisation and setting up of food processing industries in the State including the industries based on fruits and vegetables during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether Government have launched any scheme in this regard; if so the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI N. T. SHANMUGAM): (a) to (d) Ministry of Food Processing Industries does not allot funds to State Governments for setting up, expansion or modernization of food processing units. However, financial assistance under the Plan Schemes is given by the Ministry to Private Industries, Public Sector Undertakings, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Cooperatives etc. During the years 1999-2000 to 2001-2002, six units have been assisted to the extent of Rs. 379.93 lakhs for expansion, modernization and setting up of food processing units in Assam. In addition, Rs. 225 lakhs have been sanctioned for infrastructure projects in Assam during this period.

The Plan Schemes of the Ministry provide for Financial assistance to the extent of 33 per cent of the plant and machinery and technical civil work subject to a maximum of Rs. 75 lakhs in Difficult Areas which includes North Eastern Region as compared to the assistance of 25 per cent and a cap of Rs. 50 lakhs in General Areas.

Under the Technology Mission for Integrated Horticulture Development in the North East, under Mini Mission-IV which deals with food processing, the Ministry provides financial assistance, for the setting up of new units, to the extent of 50 per cent of the plant

and machinery and technical civil work subject to a maximum of Rs. 4 crores; and for expansion/modernization to the extent of 50 per cent subject to a maximum of Rs. 1.00 crore.

Problem of cattle food

*76. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the problems faced by agriculturists owning cattle farms due to the shortage of cattle food like grass etc. whenever the country is affected by natural calamaties like floods and drought; and

(b) if so, the details of remedies proposed by Government to save the poor agriculturists, from this crisis?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government takes a number of remedial actions like release of funds from the CRF/NCCF, facilitation of transport of fodder by Railways, relief to cattle camps, collection and dissemination of information on availability and requirement of fodder, distribution of fodder seeds minikits, liaison with cattle feed manufacturers, NDDB, State Governments etc. The Department has also released fund for the establishment of fodder banks.

Accident of Rajdhani Express

*77. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE :
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a rail accident took place on the fateful night of 9th September, 2002 when the Delhi bound Rajdhani Express plunged into a river near Gaya;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the number of people who died/were injured in this accident, the compensation paid to dependents of the deceased and injured;